

The Truth About Preserve Airmont's Petitions

Preserve Airmont, lead by our current mayor, Phil Gigante and village trustees Valvo and Marchesani, have spent the past two weeks spreading false information about why their names will no longer appear on the ballot on March 19, 2019. We decided to stay silent, hoping the mayor and trustees would do the right thing and finally admit the truth of what happened. They have not, and just as we did when we decided to run for office, we must take a stand and tell the residents of Airmont the truth.

Running for public office demands integrity and a dedication to truth and justice. The Preserve Airmont slate signed a sworn statement, under penalties of perjury, that they witnessed each person who signed their petitions. We trusted that the mayor and his slate would not lie or file false documents with the clerk, and therefore did not challenge any petitions.

After one of our supporters called to say that he had seen an obviously forged signature on one of the petitions that the mayor had posted online, Protect Airmont requested that the filed petitions be reviewed.

Closer analysis showed that many of the signatures on the mayor's petitions bore no resemblance to those on file with the Board of Elections; it soon became abundantly clear that a closer review was in order.

We had two options; remain silent and allow Preserve Airmont to break the law, or go to court, and preserve the integrity of our elective system. We chose to stand up and protect Airmont.

The court appearances lasted only two mornings. During the first morning, the Mayor appeared with his lawyer, the Rockland County Republican Chairman, Lawrence Garvey, and agreed to let the Board of Elections perform a line by line review of the petition signatures.

On the second day, the mayor, Mr. Valvo and Mr. Marchesani did not appear in court, even though their appearance was required by law.

We implored the Hon. Sherri Eisenpress to rule whether or not the Preserve Airmont party had committed fraud. Before the Judge could even listen to testimony, Preserve Airmont, knowing that their petitions contained fraudulent signatures, chose to concede. The Mayor and his trustees, supposed proponents of integrity and transparency, dropped out of the race, rather than have the trial go forward.

We righted the wrong, requesting the court investigate the mayor's fraudulent petitions. It is with complete disbelief that we see him now pointing fingers at Protect Airmont for having demanded judicial scrutiny.

You don't have to take our word for it. We are attaching copies of several of the pages submitted by the Preserve Airmont slate and the court transcript. You can be the judge for yourself.

Preserve Airmont has spent the past skirting the truth, and it is clear they will continue the next week doing the same. We urge you to vote Protect Airmont on March 19, 2019, because we are honest, dedicated and upstanding neighbors who have your interests at heart.